

W
O
R
D

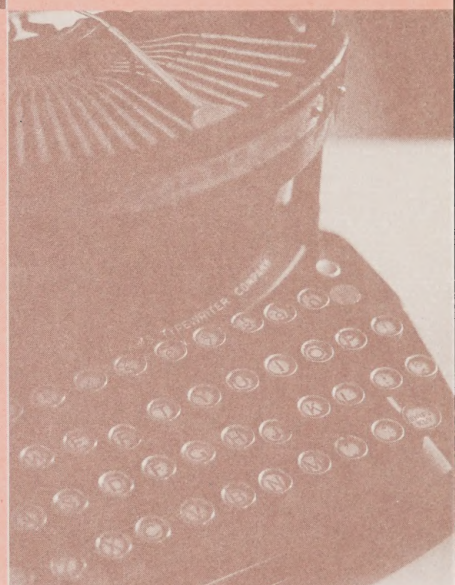


your soul
opens
and
your mind travels
as
students become
inspired

w r i t e r s



peace
college
literary magazine



..... "A Word
dropped careless
on a Page
May
stimulate an eye"

- Emily Dickinson

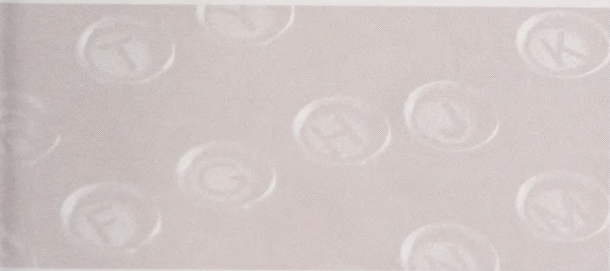
PRISM
1998

literarymagazine

peacecollege

←..... P R I S M

98



Peace College Prism

Spring 1998

Faculty Advisor: Woody Holliman

Editor: Jennifer A. Perkinson

Photography: Jennifer A. Perkinson

Graphic Design: Jennifer A. Perkinson

Contributors

- Professor Sally Buckner

Digitized by the Internet Archive

- Michelle Morris

in 2025 with funding from

North Carolina Digital Heritage Center

- Jenny Beaver

- Caralyn Bolte

- Jennifer Perkinson

- Cyndi Robinson

<https://archive.org/details/prism199800peac>

teacher

Teacher

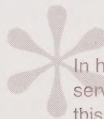


I'll bring the bread,
The wheat has been growing, vast seas of grain,
bronzing fields from equator to the poles,
since ancestors first arched their backs, reared up,
raised curious faces to the sun,
lifted hopeful arms into the sky.
Harvesters have labored hard hours
from the final faint glimmer of morning star
to the first silver of moon on the far horizon
and millers' stones grind throughout the night.

The recipe is my own:
yeast and liquid, seasonings and flour
blended in proportions I devised,
my sweat worked into the dough with feisty kneading.
I shall bring it hot from the oven, crispy-crust-ed,
scent rising with steam. With my sharpest knife,
I will cut thick slices; we shall not require the butter.
I will fill your plate as full as you will let me.

And you - with yearning green in your heart
and eyes that can see newly each new moment -
You bring the wine.

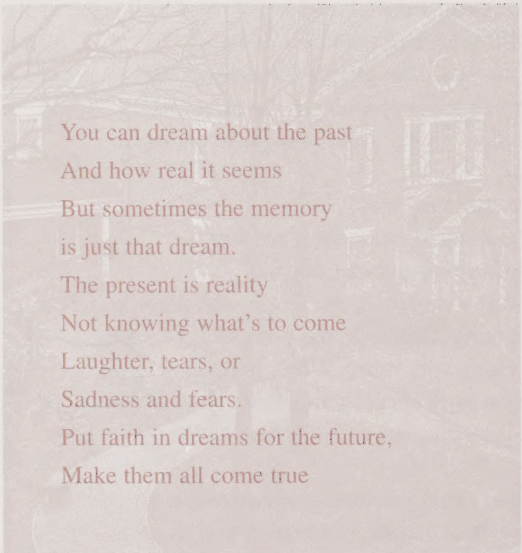
Professor Sally Buckner



In honor of Professor Sally Buckner's 28 years of dedicated service to Peace College, and her tireless efforts on behalf of this literary magazine, we are including one of her poems in this year's issue of the *Prism*. Upon her retirement in May 1998, she will be honored as Professor Emerita of English.

Dreams

You can have dreams of love
Dreams of pain
Dreams of sunshine
And dreams of rain.
The certainty of dreams
Is always unknown
Sometimes you just end up alone.



You can dream about the past
And how real it seems
But sometimes the memory
is just that dream.
The present is reality
Not knowing what's to come
Laughter, tears, or
Sadness and fears.
Put faith in dreams for the future,
Make them all come true

Dream of each day as a
new beginning
A world wide open for you.
No one can take your dreams
Unless you throw them away
Find a place inside,
where your dreams will always
stay.

Michelle Morris

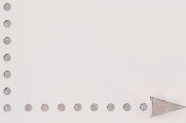
poetry

A New Point of View

Look at the world today
And all that has changed
The pain and the hurt in the world
Is so deranged.
To thrive on evil
And to create such chaos,
Who's going to win
It is all a loss.
Homeless, poverty, AIDS, and drugs,
What about love, hope, family, and hugs?
Where are our values, faith, and dreams?
We focus on despair
And hell is what it seems.
Love today is hard to find
All of our eyes seem to be blind.
Why can't others see this too,
Looking for a new point of view.
Time is short
And life is long
Let's change these worries
To a different song.
Look at the other side
Of what we know is there,
The good is there but sometimes rare.
Believe and achieve,
Hold on strong
Make the best of life
You can't go wrong.
Believe in what you do
And mean what you say,
Make the best you can
Of each and every day.
Don't always look at the
Grass being green, and the sky being blue
Look for a new point of view.
It is hard to begin
When you don't know where to start,
But look deep-deep in your heart.

Michelle Morris

a new point of view



The Secret of My Family

When my grandmother died last August at the age of ninety-six, my mother was faced with the task of going through her belongings. My grandmother had lived with my mother for sixteen years and her room was the little bedroom that had once been mine. After the funeral I wandered back into Dan-Dan's room. (My nephew couldn't say Gran-Gran when he was young so the nickname sticks to this day.) My sister and my mother were there just milling around looking at my grandmother's things that as usual were placed neatly throughout the room. When my sister picked up a small ceramic dog off the dresser and said, "I want this," I remember the feeling that overcame me. It wasn't that I wanted what she had in her hand; it was more that things in the room should stay as they were. Removing things somehow seemed a violation, even though I realized at some point it had to be done.

It was obvious that my mother was uncomfortable too. Quickly she moved for the door saying, "We will do this later."

It is always difficult when a grandparent dies. It is a signal that each member of the family must take a step up. The difficulty is

compounded when it is time to go through their belongings. This act is a final statement admitting that the person is not simply away on a trip or in the hospital. Gradually my mother started going through the things in my Dan-Dan's room. It took time and it was something she did little by little by herself, even though many other family members had offered their help. I think it was her way of taking the step up in the family, or maybe she was just saying goodbye.

With each visit to Mom's house, we brought back different trinkets. Christmas and birthday presents given over the years came back with memories etched deeply into them. The little musical snowball, which enclosed two purple and pink butterflies, had amazed Dan-Dan one Christmas when the sunlight hit the glitter inside.

The butterflies were perched on one of her favorite flowers, lilies of the valley. I must admit it was beautiful, and the music, Buttons and Bows, brought a smile to her face.

The small overnight case that I had given her came back empty now. She had been ill that year and thought she would never come to stay with my family again. The case was my way of saying that it was time for her to visit. The confusion that comes along with children in the house, the same confusion I often complain about, always delighted her.

stories

One night my mother called to see if my oldest daughter wanted my grandmother's jewelry box. When I went by her house to pick up the jewelry box, there were still a few things left inside the drawers. The necklaces, handmade by my grandmother, reminded me of visits to her house when I was a little girl. Dan-Dan always had piles of costume jewelry for us to play with. Her father had owned a little jeweler's shop and she had always loved jewelry, often making necklaces and earrings herself. I

touched each of the contents of the jewelry box knowing the care put into their construction. Then in one drawer, I found a walnut, old and discolored. It was an English walnut that had shriveled up like a dried prune, its outer husk like leather and blackened with age. Holding it in my hand, I thought through all the stories my grandmother had told me over the years. Maybe my memory was slipping but I could not think of a single story that included a walnut. As the closest thing to a family historian there is in my family, I felt sort of let down that I did not know the story that went with this special keepsake. About that time my mother walked into the room, so holding up the walnut I asked her, "Mom, where did this come from?" Laughing, my mother took the walnut from my hand.

"Your grandmother picked that up somewhere a long time ago. I don't really know where it came from but she always had it. I remember it when I was young. It's been everywhere that she ever went." She handed it back to me. "Take it if you want to." I put it back into one drawer of the jewelry box to keep it safe.

At home I took out the necklaces and the walnut for safekeeping before giving my oldest daughter the jewelry box. Showing her the walnut, I jokingly said, "This holds the secret to our family." We had watched a movie together where a man had said that same line about a drum stick with swinging beads attached on either side. It had been a movie about karate. So it was appropriate when my daughter signaled with a karate chop that she got my weak joke. Shaking her head, she took off to load the new jewelry box with her own things.

I sat down at the bar and held the walnut in my hand as if the answer to the mystery would permeate through the darkened shell. I was amazed that the shell had not rotted after so many years, and my tapping it lightly on the bar showed that it was as strong as the day it fell off the tree, maybe stronger. Again I wondered why this walnut had been so special to my grandmother.



I imagined a little girl, watched over by my great-grandparents, picking up a walnut off the ground in Sutton Park, near Birmingham, England. The year would be 1908 and the little girl would be seven, the same age as my youngest daughter now. The girl finds a walnut on her walk back from the lake where the ducks are now full from the bread crusts she has just given them. A prim and proper mother dressed just so sits on a park bench while a playful father with rolled up shirt sleeves tickles the little girl, the walnut held tightly in her hand.

Or maybe, a young woman of nineteen in 1920 finds the walnut. She saves the nut by picking it up just as it was ready to roll into the water of the Avon River. One sunny spring day, a handsome young man with strong arms rows the boat down the river while the young woman lounges in the front, a large hat shading her face from the sun. He finds a secluded area where the bank is clear, the same place that Shakesphere once roamed. A picnic lunch is unloaded from a wicker basket to remind her of the love she felt for her new husband that day.

Or did the bombs of World War II shake the walnut from the safety of its branch? A mother of two runs for an air raid shelter carrying a single black suitcase while a screeching siren signals approaching danger. Her husband has the shelter built in the backyard to try to give his family a safe place to hide from the destruction of the world. As she pulls the door to the shelter open, the walnut rolls to her feet.

The woman picks it up pausing only a few seconds before following her children down. She spends the hours in the shelter, contemplating how much the life hidden inside the shell resembles her life within an air raid shelter.

Or did the walnut come from one of my grandmother's many travels? In 1931, a woman of thirty is a tourist on the island of Majorca. It is her first trip to Spain and at the gate of the magnificent Gothic cathedral, she notices something on the ground. Picking up the walnut, she watches the waves of the Mediterranean Sea as they meet land. She considers throwing the walnut into the ocean and wonders if it might make it to yet another land. Instead she puts the walnut into her pocket and decides to help make that journey a little easier. The walnut becomes a souvenir, taking a piece of the country home, an excellent reminder later of a special place and time.

I was jolted back into reality by the sound of two sisters arguing. Before going to referee the latest conflict, I took the walnut back to my bedroom and placed it into the drawer of my jewelry box, thinking that one day my granddaughter will ask her mother about the walnut and she will probably say, "I don't know, Grandma just always had it." A smile came to my face as I realized that the walnut is truly a secret

of our family. It represents the process of time, generations passing as the walnut passes through family member's hands just as the memories have. See Dan-Dan, I was paying attention!

Lisa Lawrence

This story was selected for the 1998 Elizabeth Gibson Taylor Award, which is given for the most outstanding work of prose by a Peace student.

life

Life

Mama always told me to "Create your own path,"
I always listened.

Down my trail I trod, barren, lonely,
wishing I was on someone else's dirty road.

It's not that *my* way leads only to Dead Ends,
just twines and tangles of work, relationships,
and money that get in my way.

I don't have the time to plant or stop and admire,
Who does?

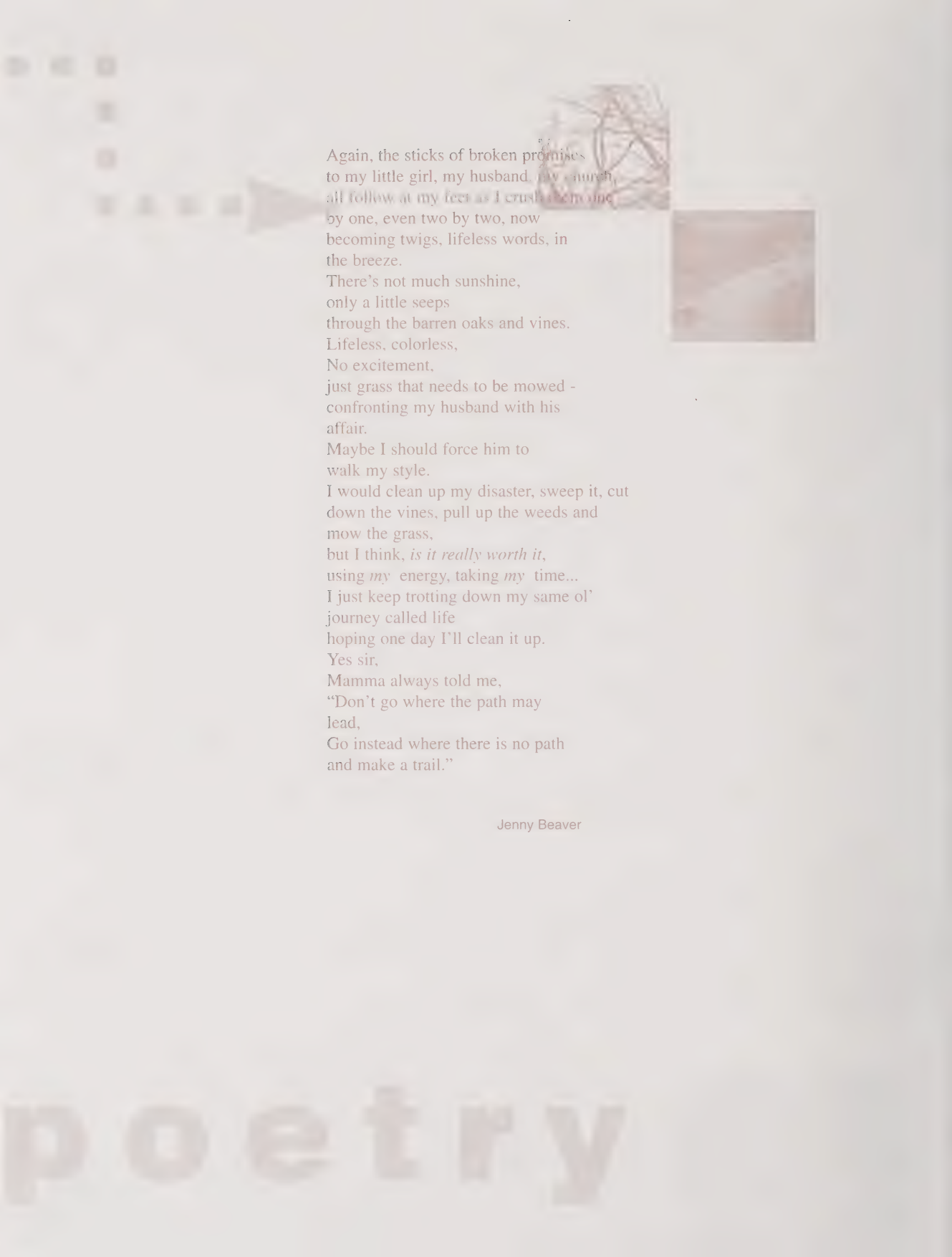
Too many weeds to pull -
car payments, house payments,
heating bills, cable bills, phone bills,
my mother-in-law, PTA's the children's
homework, packed lunches, long
meetings, cooking dinner, slumber parties,
birthday presents, wedding
presents, Christmas presents, always
able to smile.

so instead I just let those pesky
weeds grow -

I don't have the power to stop them; not
now anyway.

My course is long and tiresome,
rocks gathering in my shoes.





Again, the sticks of broken promises
to my little girl, my husband, my church,
all follow at my feet as I crush them one
by one, even two by two, now
becoming twigs, lifeless words, in
the breeze.

There's not much sunshine,
only a little seeps
through the barren oaks and vines.
Lifeless, colorless,
No excitement,
just grass that needs to be mowed -
confronting my husband with his
affair.

Maybe I should force him to
walk my style.

I would clean up my disaster, sweep it, cut
down the vines, pull up the weeds and
mow the grass,

but I think, *is it really worth it,*
using *my* energy, taking *my* time...

I just keep trotting down my same ol'
journey called life
hoping one day I'll clean it up.

Yes sir,

Mamma always told me,
"Don't go where the path may
lead,

Go instead where there is no path
and make a trail."

Jenny Beaver

poetry

spring

seductive sunsets, amid
sedate sighs of
satisfied saplings.
soothe me with
shafted sunlight
showers, while
charming caps of snow-white
peaked clouds
caress the sky blue
celestial ceiling...
earth eternal
awakens with a
Smile.

Without You

Life without you
would be
grey skies in summer,
warm days in winter,
moon in the day
sun in the night
and all things unnatural.

Untitled

You are the
Bethlehem star
in my night sky,
the locksmith to
my locked rusted
heart,
the Good Samaritan
to my battered
soul,
the shepherd
who found my lost
hope.
You have
Awakened
me.

Caralyn Soto

A New Trip

Driving along, my mind at ease and my heart full with joy, I relaxed back in the seat as the wind blew steadily on my face. In the distance a dark and gloomy atmosphere was appearing. As I breathed in deeply, my lungs were expanded with the fresh bay air, almost containing a hint of rain. I was so excited and anxious to continue on, that I chose to leave the top down on my slate colored BMW. It was as I neared the midpoint of my journey, that I realized how memorable this Labor Day weekend was going to be.

I had left Peace just over two hours ago, when I dashed out of my last class at noon in order to beat the Friday holiday traffic leaving Raleigh. Driving alone on a lengthy road trip was not new to me. However, leaving the congested city of Raleigh and heading to our cottage in Deltaville, Virginia was a new experience. After departing, I passed the time with imagining how wonderfully delighted my family was going to be to see me, and I them, home from college for the first time. As I was daydreaming, suddenly the exit sign for Westpoint appeared in the distance. I was determined to get on the right track this time, as I had taken a wrong turn only an hour ago. And from the tone of my father's voice on the car phone, I knew that getting lost again would be a bad idea. Therefore, I turned onto the Westpoint exit with a little flutter in my chest. The cottage, the family, and the memorable weekend was drawing closer.

With only an hour remaining of the trip, I held my lead foot back from exceeding the posted speed limit. I seemed to be taking everything in that day, almost as if I were a video camera. The

car slightly lifted as I crossed the first bridge over the Chesapeake Bay. The waves wore strong whitecaps in the distance. I could just barely hear the swishing of the water. It was mostly being drowned out by the roar and hum of the bridge as I drove over its ridged metal strips. Just off the bridge, the road led to the small town of Westpoint. Slowly I stopped the car at the stop light. The sky was still overcast, but seemed to be clearing. As I sat, I glanced at the people walking along the streets at the small four-way intersection. I wondered if anything special was happening in their lives today. I reflected on my own life then, what this weekend meant to me, and realized what I had accomplished and suddenly how proud I was. The faces and expressions on those people stayed vivid in my memory as I drove on. It was a very special day for me; had those strangers ever felt as I did at that moment? Well, all I knew was that this day was beginning to reveal how my life was changing. Nearly an hour passed by now. Each minute was filled with scenes of cobalt water, endless farmland, ancient oak trees, and a drape of plush clouds, containing their water, and leaving a freshness in the air. Hidden slightly below a tree branch, appeared the miniature sign of Deltaville. Oh,

how thrilled I was to see that sign after the many hours of highway I had covered to get to that destination. The town looked just as I had remembered it. I turned down Lover's Lane and took in all the sights as my car glided forward along the winding narrow road. As I turned a final corner, I saw our tall Victorian home-place in the distance. I was

finally there. I was just seconds away from completing my journey.

Oddly however, I began to realize that the journey I had made to the cottage was not the only journey I had made that day. The trip also seemed to mark the beginning of my independence and new life as a college student pursuing a fulfilling future. Therefore, I began to realize that in reaching this destination of life, I was the person my parents wanted me to become. Slowly, I was accomplishing many steps leading me to a successful, healthy, adult life.

After pulling in the dirt driveway and stopping the car, I saw my mother run out of the house to greet me. For a moment she stood holding on to one of the posts on our porch. I will never forget the look in her eyes that day. Her eyes showed love, and praise. I hurried out of the car and went to greet mom, and then my father as he had just come out onto the porch. I felt as if they treated me slightly differently that day. That was my first trip home from college. I had proven to them how well I had completed my first two weeks, and now they opened their arms to me, and continued to lift my confidence and pride. I will always remember that new experience of being on my own and showing new independence that Labor Day weekend.

Jennifer Perkinson

lost land

Cattle graze freely, no need for fences,
rarely lifting their lowered heads upright,
grazing on grass so green it almost glows.
Apple orchards that travel on for miles,
bent limbs waving like familiar friends,
branches weave like lines on a road map,
and no fruit sweeter will pass your lips.
The old house hangs to the side of a hill
ready to slip away after all these years.
Beyond those trees are many fields
with fine fertile soil going on forever.
This is my home and my father's home.
My grandfather planted each apple tree,
His hands, the first to till those fields.
If my back remains turned to the road,
the terrible truth can be forever disputed,
But sense seeps into the corner of my eye,
the auction sign that I ignored is visible now.
Grandfather's spirit rustles the orchard trees,
The breeze pushes me toward the road
Whispering, just walk on my young girl.

Lisa Lawrence

poetry

daddy

Daddy

Quietly, silently, he stands in the shadow as he always has
Patiently watching mistakes and failures
Only judging with a simple pat on my shoulder.
Encouraging words, supportive voice,
like the Little Engine that could.
Constructive criticism to guide my way
insisting it only makes me stronger
Heartbreaks, Heartthrobs, Disappointments,
Confidences - he's endured them all.
Applause, License, Conformation, Graduation,
Eyes welded with tears.
Life endeavors, Life threateners, Lifetimes,
my Supporter, my Admirer, my Confidante,
my Best Friend.
My Daddy.

Jenny Beaver

Size 24 Acceptance in a Size 6 World

In recent years, the fashion industry, along with the media, has saturated the public with "thin being in." If you watch television, shop in just about any store, or read any of the popular magazines, you know that the media has placed models like Cindy Crawford, Tyra Banks, and Kate Moss upon the pedestals of thinness, beauty and social acceptance.



It's even more frustrating to read their bios in the magazines and learn that keeping their shape includes eating "whatever" and exercising "whenever." Yeah, right. I would be willing to bet that the skinny-minnie cover girls find the lure of the big-bucks modeling contract as all the incentive they need to maintain their figure by exercising daily for extended periods, and basing their diet primarily on fruits and vegetables with an appetizer of appetite suppressants and a dessert of laxatives.

Yet, in spite of the unreality of it, many women aspire to have the super model figure, and they would move heaven and earth and anything in between to achieve that look. I don't understand why women want to set themselves up for failure, because unless you are committed to centering your life around the fantasy of diet and exercise as the end-all and be-all of existence, you will never achieve the model look. Super models are paid to look the way they do. Trophy wives with their Barbie-like proportions have the financial backing of their sugar daddy Donald Trumps to ensure they will keep their looks and not become cast-off Ivanas. Only a very small percentage of the women in the world have the time, energy, and money to maintain their looks. The rest of us live in

reality, and it's time for us to face the Diet Coke and realize that to a certain extent, the body shape we have is what God has given us to work with. It's time we learn to dress the figure we have and get on with life and leave the anorexic fashions in the magazines.

One way we can fight against the fashion and media industries is by demanding that women with less-than-perfect figures model all fashions. Make the designers conform to our figures, not Christie Brinkley's. An hour with a good makeup artist and hairdresser can make any woman feel glamorous, but if she's wearing clothes that don't fit her unique proportions, she can still feel frumpy. By having the designers make clothes that really fit well she can feel good about herself, and this could help raise her self-esteem and confidence. As long as we are making the designers make the changes in the way they design clothes, why don't we also demand that the models be a realistic size. Let's toss out the size four models and reset the standards by using size ten or twelve models. If we do that, then it would also stand to reason that the plus-size industry could stand for an overhaul as well. This means tossing out the size twelves and using women who can wear size sixteen, eighteen to twenty as spokesmodels. Once done, I feel that the average woman can feel better about herself. She can see that other women of varying shapes and sizes can find fashions that fit them and look radiant, self-confident, and beautiful, and she will see that beauty comes in different packages.

Another way to dispel with the waif look is to wage war against diet plans that are nutritionally unsound and unrealistic. This includes the Rice Diet, Cabbage Soup Diet, Grapefruit Diet, and any diet that limits the scope of foods you eat. Not only are they boring and hard to follow after two days, they are a nutritionist's nightmare. These diets have us eat proportions that are ridiculously small and unsatisfying. The levels of nutrition in these proportions are well below what the U.S. RDA guidelines recommend. The diet industry must recognize this fact because the people behind the plan also suggest that if you follow a





particular diet plan, you should also take a vitamin supplement. Some of the more commercial diet plans have developed their own secret formula of vitamins, which at best are just mega-doses of a normal vitamin. At worst, these supplements may be full of substances that can cause long-term damage to one's health. It's time to develop an eating plan that not only meets nutritional guidelines, but serves portions that conquer hunger pangs so we aren't standing in front of the vending machine an hour later trying to justify and rationalize the need for the M & M's. Once such a plan is developed, we can focus on something else besides our next meal.

As a person with a weight problem, I am just as much a victim as anybody else of the propaganda distribution by the fashion industry and the media. In an attempt to lower the numbers on my bathroom scale, I am guilty of doing things to my body that have killed other people who didn't have to lose as much weight as I should lose. While I know that I need to do something to lower my weight as well as my risk for heart disease and diabetes, I long ago took back the control that the media had over me with regard to what diet I followed and how I dressed. When I look at myself in the mirror, I see every figure flaw that has been described in magazines: hour-glass shape, big hips, saddle-bag thighs, cottage cheese legs, bat wing arms, both pear and apple shapes, love handles that provide a sure grip, and spare tires that would fit an eighteen-wheeler. In addressing my figure flaws, I have

followed diets that have left me faint, nauseous, and doubled over by migraines brought on by severely low blood sugar levels. I have bought clothes that address a few of my flaws, but have yet to coordinate something that takes care of every flaw at the same time. I have given up trying to model myself after Cindy Crawford, with her dazzling external appearance, and have tried to follow in the steps of some more realistic role models. People like Rosie O'Donnell, Starr Jones, and even Oprah Winfrey, despite her battle with the bulge, have shown that you don't have to be thin to make a difference. If we, as a society, can learn to overcome racial biases and accept homosexuality as an alternate lifestyle, then accepting our bodies is just one more hurdle to overcome in our attempt to appreciate the diversity that exists in the world.

Cindy Robinson





Dear Dad

Dear Dad
Thanks for the
fishing trips we never
took
for the ball games I
never watched with
you.
Thanks for
not being the first man I ever
loved,
and for the letters
that never came.
I appreciate it,
Dad,
because these things
have made me
who I am -
and hey Dad,
I'm better off for it.

Caralyn Bolte

poetry

drifting slumber

Navigating my boat of a car through the narrow channels
Of asphalt sea before me, I see my daughter in the mirror,
Her buckled car seat offering the protection of a live vest.

She fights the sleepy drone of the road.

Her face lifted upwards, head bobbing up and down,

She struggles to stay conscious before succumbing

And floating away in the dreamy riptide

That she can no longer resist.

Steering the vessel into the neighborhood harbor,

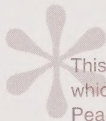
I float into the home port.

Releasing my precious cargo from her safe restraint,

I place her on the island that is her bed

Until the slumbering ocean washes away from her.

Cyndi Robinson



This poem was selected for the 1998 Penny Poetry Award,
which is given for the most outstanding work of poetry by a
Peace student.



